

Chapter 0045

(James POV)

I replayed Alpha Brett's words over and over again in my head, trying to figure out what Alpha Brett was referring to and why he would suddenly terminate two important treaties. The only thing that seemed to fit was that Alpha Brett had heard about what happened between Lily and I at Stephanie's memorial service.... but would that really be enough to turn his back on one of his pack's biggest allies?

"How long are you going to sit there staring at me?" Dr. Hyder asked gruffly. "I have other things to do."

It had been ten minutes since Alpha Brett left us alone. After he left, I had taken a seat in a guest chair opposite Dr. Hyder, and then immediately found myself lost in my own thoughts.

"Is Lily doing okay?" I asked at last. Dr. Hyder looked a little taken aback. Given the gravity of Alpha Brett's announcement, even I was surprised that this was the first thing I asked.

"Next question."

I furrowed my eyebrows. "But you have not answered my first question..."

"I do not remember agreeing to answer any of your questions."

I sighed. "Do you know where Lily is?"

"Next question."


"Have you talked to her?"

"Next question."

"Are you going to answer any of my questions?"

"I doubt it."

"Why not?"

"I am having much more fun being an a&&hole and watching you squirm," Dr. Hyder responded smugly. 

I sighed and covered my face with my hands. I tried to remind myself why I thought coming here was a good idea. So far, it was nothing but a big disaster.

"If you are done asking me questions that I already told your father I would not answer, I will answer the questions that you should be asking me but are not."

I removed my hands from my face and looked at him curiously.

"I have known you and your parents for a long time. I have always known that they were far from perfect, but I was willing to overlook their flaws.

I am no longer willing to do so. I no longer believe that your parents' mistakes are one-off errors in judgment. The way that they run their lives and the West Mountain Pack has enabled evil to take root. That is their fault.

The jury is still out on how I feel about you.

You horribly mistreated Lily, and in my view you have forfeited the right to even say her name, much less ever see her again. At the same time, I recognize that you have been manipulated for your entire life without ever knowing it. I can cut you a tiny bit of slack because of that.

The slack ends today. You are a grown-up man now. You may be taking over the leadership of an entire pack soon. There will be the lives of over 10,000 wolves depending on you. You cannot follow your parents' lead of burying your head in the sand. There are too many problems in your pack to afford you that luxury.

You need to pull your head out of your a&& and start seeing the forest for the trees. If you are unwilling or unable to figure out how much the people around you have been manipulating things AND put a stop to it, you will have to step out of the way and let someone else lead.

I say all this as a warning, not a suggestion. I am fully prepared to go to the werewolf council if need be, and I promise you that if I take that step, a couple of treaties with my nephew will be the least of your worries."

Dr. Hyder had a somber seriousness to his tone. I had no doubt that he was serious, but I was still baffled. My parents and I butt heads a lot, but I thought my father was a pretty decent alpha overall.

"What are the problems that you are referring to?"

"Next question."

"Who has been manipulating me?"

"Next question."

I stood up angrily. "Seriously? You are going to play this game again?"

Dr. Hyder stood up and glared right back at me.

"I do not play games, James.

When you become a leader, you have a responsibility to think of your pack's needs over your own, just like when you have children.

I have my own packs and my own family to worry about. I do not need to add your drama to my list of responsibilities.

Listen to me carefully this time, because I will only say this once.

I am giving you an opportunity to prove that you can be the leader that the Moon Goddess put you in a position to be.

If you cannot figure out on your own who you can trust and who you cannot, you do not deserve to be alpha. Likewise, if you cannot figure out on your own how to protect your most vulnerable pack members from abuse and mistreatment, you are a failure. Period. End of discussion."

I rubbed my temples. I was getting a headache.

"What about Lily?" I asked.

"What about Lily?" he taunted me.

"Where does she fit into all of this?"

"You already closed that chapter of your life, James."

"Just tell me where she is!" I yelled, losing my patience and my temper. I knew that yelling at Dr. Hyder was a stupid move, but what did I have to lose at that point?

"You have not given me a single reason that I should tell you anything!" he growled back at me. "You have not cared about her for the past six years. You have done everything in your power to try and destroy her. Why should I believe that you care now?"

"She is my mate!"

"Correction, she WAS your mate. You made sure to take care of that little problem. You do not deserve that girl and somewhere, deep, deep, deep down I think you know that. That is why you are feeling unsettled, and that is why you cannot let her go."


I felt my blood begin to boil.

"YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW I FEEL. SHE IS THE ONE WHO DOES NOT DESERVE ME! SHE IS WEAK! SHE IS WOLFLESS! HER SELFISHNESS AND STUPIDITY COST ME THE LIFE OF MY FIRST MATE!

I do not care about her, and I have never cared about her, and I will never care about her!!!!"

"And yet you are here," Dr. Hyder sneered at me.

He stood up. "We are done here. If I spend another minute

 +20 BONUS

in this room with you, I am afraid that I will either kill you or book myself on the next flight to werewolf council headquarters.”

I growled in frustration, but I knew there was nothing more that I could do or say.

Then --with his back to me and his hand on the doorknob-- Dr. Hyder said two more things.

“Do yourself a couple of favors. Ask your mother about Tyler. And maybe just maybe think about celebrating Lily’s birthday.”


With that, Dr. Hyder left the room, and the Red River guard came in to escort me out.


Little did I know at the time what huge bombs Dr. Hyder had just dropped in my lap.

 Lady Gwen  Author

“ *Buckle your seatbelts! In the next couple of chapters, one of the first mysteries in the book will finally be solved!* ”

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